

# Check-in from the School Counselor

## Thursday, April 2, 2020

Happy April, SMRS Families!

I hope this e-mail finds you all well. I appreciate the responses received from my “check-in” form so far; please know all feedback is taken into consideration as we move forward in determining the best plan of action for our students continue learning remotely. For any parents who have not yet filled out the form, please visit this link: <https://forms.gle/nUWnXKG6wpGtaMiQ7> (please note: the form should be filled out one **per child**, as I know not necessarily all children in the same family are handling remote learning the same way).

For today’s edition of “Check-in from the School Counselor,” I thought it would be beneficial to share some tips related to cyber safety, especially as we move toward more interactions via Zoom and other virtual learning platforms.

It is important to remember that our children now live in an “insta-world.” For many students, the world revolves around their phone or tablet and social media. Instead of a focus on number of friends, many now place more importance on the number of followers on their Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok accounts. I encourage parents to be aware of what accounts your child has created for social media, and to make sure you see all accounts (students sometimes create multiple Instagram accounts called “Finsta” (Fake Instagram) to filter the content they share that parents / adults can see. It is also imperative that we educate children on the permanency of what they share online (as well as how what they may think they are sharing with just friends can be shared with others without their knowledge), and ensure that the child’s device has privacy settings enabled (i.e., turning off location tracking or access to camera / microphone) to protect him/her. Below are some links to web resources that may be helpful for parents regarding cyber safety education, as well as a couple articles for kids and teens:

Article: “Media & Digital Literacy: Resources for Parents” (Edutopia)  
<https://www.edutopia.org/digital-literacy-technology-parent-resources>

Article: “Raising Digital Citizens” (Stay Safe Online)  
<https://staysafeonline.org/get-involved/at-home/raising-digital-citizens/>

Article: “Internet Safety” (KidsHealth.org)  
<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/net-safety.html>

Website: [www.common sense media.org](http://www.common sense media.org) (click on the “Parents Need to Know” tab)

FOR KIDS: “Online Safety” (<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/online-id.html?WT.ac=ctg#cathouse>)

FOR TEENS: “Online Safety” (<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/internet-safety.html?WT.ac=ctg#catsafebasics>)

FOR TEENS: “Protecting Your Online Identity / Reputation” (<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/online-id.html?WT.ac=t-ra#catsafebasics>)

I hope you are able to find these articles and resources useful as we continue navigating learning in an online world. As always, please be in touch with me via e-mail with any questions and/or concerns you

may have about your child, and know my continued prayers for health and safety are with you and your family.

Take Care,

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